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LETTERS OF ALEXANDER D. KELLY.

The Kelly family located at a very early date in Westmoreland county, Va. An old Bible shows that Alexander Kelly and Elizabeth, his wife, had a son, James Kelly (born 12th March, 1737-38), who married Susan Wilson (born Oct. 4, 1737). They had issue, John Kelly, born April 3, 1761, Spicer Donathan, Molly Kelly, married Joseph Wilson, Sr., James Y. Kelly, born 12th Sept., 1765, Alexander D. Kelly. (See QUARTERLY, XV., 129-131.)

As indicated by the names, this Kelly family appears to have married into the Spicer* and Doniphan† families of the Northern Neck. The two Kellys, who repaired the old Christ Church in Lancaster county, and whose bodies lie side by side in an enclosure near the church, belonged to this family (Meade, *Old Churches*, etc., II., 120).

The following letters, illustrating the emigration westward, are furnished from the originals by Professor Henry Thompson Louthan, of the College of William and Mary, obtained from James Y. Kelly, Esq., an attorney-at-law of Georgetown, Kentucky. They were written by Hon. Alexander D. Kelly, the great grandfather of Mr. Louthan, to his brother, James Kelly, Esq., the grandfather of Mr. James Y. Kelly above mentioned.

Virginia, Richmond County, 25 July, 1802.

DEAR BROTHER:

By Mr. Neale I receiv^d. your obliging letter, dated 28th May, directed to our worthy father, which too plainly brought to my view, the remembrance of him, who ever was while living, the best of parents, & greatest earthly friend, which I ever possessed. He, lamentable to relate, after a short illness, of about seven or Eight days, was forced by that cruel monster death! to quit the stage of action! about the 8th of April last! This I assure you brother, was the most affecting scene, that ever presented itself within my View. I have been managing the business of the plantation &c., ever since.

* The Spicer family begins with Arthur Spicer, a lawyer, of Richmond county, who died in 1699, leaving an only son, John Spicer. The latter was sent to England and educated at the Charter House. He was a justice of King George county, and his will was proved by his wife Mary in 1726.

† Doniphan was doubtless the correct spelling for *Donathan*, which does not appear in the records of the Northern Neck. See for Doniphan, QUARTERLY, XVI., 290.

Spicer, poor fellow, left me about the 1st of June, on a rout to the back parts, with a View of repairing his declining & much impair^d state of health. I have not heard from him lately. Brother John wrote you immediately after the death of our worthy Father, informing you thereof, but M^r. Neale tells me you had never receiv^d. the letter. I must therefore, earnestly request your coming in, with all convenient speed, it being the partic^ular wish of the Legatees, to have a Settlement of the estate this fall.

There has been many deaths, & time has produced great change in circumstances, since you left here last. I have never as yet receiv^d. one scrip of a pen from you, since you have been living in Kentucky, which surprizes me not a little. as I have with pleasure, always wrote you, by every oppor^y., that occu^d.

I am now keeping bachelor's hall, & expect to remain in that line, untill I explore the rich lands of Kentucky &c., which I shall shortly do, unless am prevented by the hostile & overruling conduct of a people in them parts, term^d. Democrats, who as I am inform^d. have shut their ears & lock^t up their senses, to the sound reasonings of a moderate Federalist, I say moderate, because the term is justly applied, whereas to shew me a moderate democrat, would be almost an impossibility, or rather, a wonder of wonders. I could write you much more, but fearing you might impeach me with proclivity, this shall suffice for the present. This leaves myself & family in good health, hoping it will find you & Sister Nanny & family the same, to whom you will please tender my best respects, as also all my acquaintance of your parts, particularly Uncle Tapley Willson & his family.

Accept Dr. Brother the kind love and sincere wish, for your happiness, both here & hereafter, of your Affectionate brother,
Alex^r. D. Kelly.

P. S. I think it useless.
to purchase you a negro
girl, as you are otherways
provided for. A. D. K.

Richmond County, July 26th. 1803.

DEAR BROTHER:

It rejoices me that I am once more permitted through the interposition of divine providence, to drop you a few lines, fervently hoping they may find you and yours enjoying good Health, as we do at present, thank God for his great mercies. I wrote you by Colo. Collins, and expected to have receiv^d. an Answer before now, but have been disappointed. No news very particular. Jess in whom you had an Interest, died about the middle of June, Bristoe is to be valued, and I am to pay you your part of him, in any manner you may direct. You have also an Interest of one Sixth part of the one half of the land where I live, the Land I believe cannot be sold, untill the representatives all become of age, of course it will be rented out, and you shall receive your proportionable part of the rents. Concerning other affairs, I am still satisfied that the deeds of Gift made to John, was not counterfeit, and as to the deed made to you, or the sum of money, which was said to be in the House at father's death, I have not been able to get any further correct information, am therefore of the opinion that the report is false. Our wheat crops this year are uncommonly sorry, and owing to the extreme dry summer our crops of corn wear the same melancholy appearance. I hope you will write to me very shortly. Dinah Joins me in loving respects, to you y^r. wife and family, whilst I remain Y^r. Affectionate brother, till death

Alex^r. D. Kelly.

Fauquier, 5th. November, 1806.

DEAR BROTHER:

This leaves myself & family in good health, hoping it may find you and family the same. You^l. receive by Cousin V. Kelly only forty-eight dollars, and I am truly sorry, that I have it not in my power to send you the whole. Believe me it is impossible to collect money here, and your part of the money for bristoe, I lent more than a year ago, (not knowing when I might hear from you) upon condition that it should be re-

turned in one month to me, but unfortunately I am disappointed, and can't get one cent, for this Improper conduct, I must beg your pardon. Could I only made tolerable collections on other scores, I should have been able to send you every cent; but an Ex^{on}. which I have had against a man in this county ever since last January have not been able to collect as yet, which If I could, would nearly have paid you. Believe me brother, it concerns me much: thus to disappoint you: its not a matter of choice, but misfortune. I have serious notions of coming to Kentucky next spring, which should I do: depend on it if possible, will bring you the balance. Will thank you to drop me a line, respecting the price of Lands, &c., in your part of the country, also how negroes trade. Dinah Joines me in Love to you, your wife & family, Whilst I remain Yours till death

Alex^r. D. Kelly.

Virginia, Fauquier 25th. Feby., 1809.

DEAR BROTHER:

I am happy in taking up my pen to write you a few lines, which I hope will find yourself and family enjoying good health. I suppose you have nearly concluded, that you are never to receive the money which I am so justly owing: but I beg you not to despair quite, as I am and ever have been determined, to pay you every cent. Sorry crops, added to the extremity of the times, has really heretofore rendered it impossible for me to raise money, however, I have some likely young negroes, which I took in part payment for my Land in Richmond County, any of whom you shall have at a fair moderate price, or indeed any other property which I possess, that you may want, in order to pay the debt. I expect they would sell well in Country, whereas they will not sell here, in consequence of the great scarcity of cash. If you cannot come to Virginia, you could write to brother John, who I suppose could negotiate the business to your satisfaction; however, if in the interim I should be so fortunate as to get any money, I will take the first opportunity to forward it to you. I receiv^d. in-

closed, in your letter by Mr. Efford, the memmo. of L. Eidson's Acc^t. (which I gave to Mr. V. Kelly some time ago) with your request that I should send a *true* statement back to you: James Kelly Jr. informed me, that my name was made very free with in Kentucky, and I suppose from your requesting me to send a *true* statement, that you are among those who suppose I have not already sent a *true* one. If you had discovered a mistake in the Account why did you not point it out to me? as I requested you. You ought never to give a positive opinion from *exparte* evidence, for I am convinced when you again examine the enclosed Account, you will acknowledge that I have done L. Eidson every justice and more than Justice. Why don't some of them come forward and settle with me. I am ready and have been for a considerable time to settle the Account, and when settled to pay any balance which may be due from me, but it is quite the reverse, I have inadvertantly paid more than the mount left in my hands. How then can those people, who ought to be my friends, be so unrighteous, so ungrateful towards me, to attempt to stigmatize my character, among strangers, which is dearer to me than life, without coming forward in the first instance, and demanding a fair settlement, I say, it is ungrateful, 'tis cruel, but I will forbear, and only beg you, to request some one of my good friends, to come forward and settle with me, before they suffer their abuse and ingratitude to go any farther.

I have just moved to a Farm which I purchased with bonds, about six miles below Fauquier Court House, the soil is much worn tho' of an improving nature. I really should be happy to see you here. Brother John & family was well a few days ago. I live about ten miles from him. I will now give you a short sketch of the politics of the day & conclude. I suppose you have heard that Mr. Madison is our President elect and Clinton vice. The Embargo will be raised the 4th of March, as to all nations except G. Britain & France & their dependencies, and non-intercourse, & non-importation immediately go in force against them. Our navy & army will also be increased. Dinah*

* Dinah Conway, second wife of John Kelly, was sister of Peter Conway, whose will was recorded in Fauquier county Feb. 25, 1833.

joins me in love to you, your wife, family & all enquiring friends. Please present me respectfully to all acquaintances, Whilst I subscribe myself,

Your affectionate Brother,

A. D. Kelly.

P. S. Should any Error present itself to you, in the enclosed account, I pray you to point it out in your next letter, and let me hear from you very shortly.

A. D. K.

Spring Hill,* Fauquier, Va., 20th July, 1825.

DEAR BROTHER:

It is so long since I attempted to drop you a line, and indeed so long since I had the pleasure to receive one from you, that I scarcely know how or where to begin: I will however commence, by telling you, that my family and friends generally, enjoy a reasonable portion of good health, as I hope you and yours do.

We are Dear Brother, the only two left, of a numerous family, monuments of Divine Mercy and goodness, and I think we ought to draw near and cultivate a close and brotherly union while permitted to remain probationers in this vale of tears. Perhaps in this I have hitherto been too remiss, but I promise amendment.

By a letter which I lately rec^d. from my highly esteemed friend Mr. Austin Bradford, I am informed of your contemplated visit to old Virginia, the ensuing fall. Do not suffer any ordinary occurrence to prevent your coming, for you cannot be sensible, how happy we should all be, once more, to have the pleasure of your company with us. Hoping to have that pleasure, in a month or so, I shall defer giving you an account of occurrences here untill we meet.

* The "Spring Hill" plantation in Fauquier is at present owned by Mrs. Hannah Lawrason Brown, the widow of the late Lieutenant William Judson Brown, a grandson of Alexander D. Kelly, who owned this plantation certainly as early as 1808.

I rec^d. a very kind and friendly letter some time past, from Cousin Thomas C. Kelly, which I ought long since to have answered, but assure him that my not doing so, does not proceed, from any want of respect, that he has my best wishes for his future prosperity and happiness, and that I shall always be happy to see or hear from him, and to see and hear of his welfare and happiness. His worthy mother and family were all well three days ago and are very anxious to see him.

M^{rs}. Kelly and the children, unite in affectionate remembrance to you and family and all enquiring friends, particularly your son James and Cousin George P. Kelly and their respective families, while I remain

Dear brother,

Yours unchangeably,

Alexander D. Kelly.

P. S. Don't fail paying
us a visit this fall.

A. D. K.

LETTERS* OF HON. STEVENS THOMSON MASON.

To his Father, John T. Mason.

(Extracts.)

New York, January 31, 1842: Moneyed affairs here seem to grow worse and worse. Everyone seems to be complaining; and the anticipated non-payment of interest due on to-morrow by Pennsylvania is looked upon as the last blow to State credits here and in Europe. M^r. Phelps who had postponed the dissolution of the Union, and the bankruptcy of the entire nation, for a few years, now considers those two evils, as on the eve of consummation, particularly as Congress has refused to repeal the bankrupt law.

July 16, 1842: No improvement as yet seems to take place in money matters or business affairs here. In fact every day

* Communicated by Kate Mason Rowland.